

CREATING A CHINESE WEBSITE TO PROMOTE A RENTAL COTTAGE IN LAPLAND OF FINLAND

Suvi Salo

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Author(s) Suvi Salo	
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<p>This product-oriented thesis introduces the process of creating a website for a rental cottage targeting Chinese visitors using Wordpress. The main focus is on creating a customer experience focused website for a small independent operator. The product is a Chinese website hosted in Finland.</p> <p>The thesis presents the basic technical aspects of website creation and web design. The necessary steps to building a website are presented in this report. This includes choosing the host and the content management system. Therefore, in this thesis the different platforms are introduced and compared, as well as the general requirements for the platforms are introduced. This thesis is oriented for beginners in website development.</p> <p>At first the thesis introduces the commissioner and the cottage and its surroundings. In addition, some current data of Chinese tourists in Finland is presented. The goals and aims of the product are explained.</p> <p>As the focus is on creating a website targeted to the Chinese audience, the different aspects of Chinese online buying behavior were researched. In addition to otherwise presenting the results of the research, the search engine optimization for Chinese search engines is introduced and different factors affecting the placement of the site.</p> <p>In the process description the development of the product is presented. The author demonstrates the results of building a website combining the theory of Chinese online buying behavior with web design and development.</p> <p>At the end of the thesis, the conclusion, suggestions for future and the author's own learning experience are explained. The different challenges that were faced during the process are discussed.</p>	
Keywords Tourism, Lapland, Chinese tourists, Rental Cottage, Finland, Website Development	

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1. Introduction

In the recent years, Finland has become a destination for Asian tourists. In 2015 the growth of Asian tourists coming to Finland was the most rapid. With Asian tourists mainly consisting of Chinese and Japanese, the growth was over 23 % compared with the growth of tourists coming from EU and Africa being 6 % more than in 2014 (Tilastokeskus 2016, 2). In 2015 the Chinese tourists formed the most important group with 182 000 stays in accommodation units in Finland, creating a growth of 41,3 % more than in year 2014 (Tilastokeskus 2016, 2). By analysing these numbers, it is important to small business owners in Finland to realize the growth and take advantage of the available data and the current state of modernization of technology in China. In 2015, China reached 688 million Internet users of which two out of three users are using their smartphones for browsing (Lee 2016). Therefore, it is also important to make sure the business is active online, and the website should be focused on maximizing the experience of the visitor with a mobile optimized website development.

The objective of this product-oriented thesis is to plan a simple and well-functioning, customer experience focused website for a rental cottage called Hillankukka that is in Ylläs, Lapland of Finland. The target group is the Chinese travellers coming to Finland and Lapland from Shanghai and Beijing. Currently they form a relatively large group of the incoming Chinese tourists in Finland with 16 % coming from Beijing and 13 % from Shanghai (Visit Finland, 2015a, 12). Since in 2016 the 30 to 39 years old travellers created 24 % and 20 to 29 years old travellers created 20 % of the Chinese outbound tourism, it was decided the target group should consist of Chinese mainland customers aged 25-35 who are travelling in either a small group of friends or with their families (TravelChinaGuide 2016).

The website is planned to meet the needs of the growing segment of Chinese visitors in Finland while considering the requirements of the commissioning party. The product is meant to make the cottage more appealing to tourists coming from Beijing and Shanghai while taking into account the manageability of the online platform for the owner.

The thesis consists of six chapters which are introduction, a chapter introducing the cottage and the current state of the website, Chinese buying behavior, website design and development, process description and discussion. The introduction aims to explain in detail the objectives and the need for the product that is the website. The theoretical framework in chapters three and four aims to explain further the trend of Chinese tourists in Fin-

land and the importance of user experience focused website and the trends in website design. Some important influencers in the user experience focused content creation are used as sources in addition to online sources such as the Official Statistics of Finland. Chapter four focuses on covering the Chinese buying behavior online and their traveling habits. Website design and development is explained in chapter three.

The empirical part of the thesis has two chapters. Chapter five constitutes of the development process of the Chinese website. The process of writing the thesis is explained as well as the process of creating the website. The creation and importance of user experience focused website are discussed in detail. The final chapter summarizes the project and concludes the thesis process. Suggestions for further development of the Chinese website for the cottage will be presented. The author evaluates the project and self-development in context of thesis as a learning process.

2. The commissioner and surroundings

In this thesis the process of launching a website in Chinese for a rental cottage in Lapland of Finland will be explained in detail. Chapter 2 aims to explain the commissioner and the surroundings of the cottage better to understand the product. The product is a customer experience focused website to advertise and give information about the cottage in the Chinese language mainly targeted to 25- to 35-year-old travelers coming from Beijing and Shanghai. The cottage is called Hillankukka and it is in Ylläs, Lapland of Finland close to the skiing slopes (Hillankukka 2016).



Figure 1. Location of Hillankukka on map (Google 2016)

The cottage can accommodate a group of 10 with two extra beds. In downstairs of the cottage there are two bedrooms and the rest of the beds are in a loft on the upper floor. The kitchen is fully equipped and there is also a washing machine available. The cottage comes with an indoor sauna and outside there is a Laplander's hut where the guests can barbeque and cook their meals. There is also a pond available for swimming during the Summer months. Some of the amenities are two mountain bikes and sledges for the children. (Hillankukka 2016). Therefore, this would make an ideal accommodation for a family or friends looking to experience the nature of Lapland in a more authentic environment.

The commissioning party is an independent cottage owner whose family has been renting the cottage since 1980. However, the company was not created until 2012 to get into the business more actively. Renting of Hillankukka has been supervised by the owner since the beginning. An agent was hired in 2012 in attempts to increase the occupancy rate of

the cottage. Hillankukka has had its own website available in Finnish since 2012. In the beginning of 2015 the website was also available in English, but it was later discarded due to maintenance issues until its re-establishment in 2017 when the site was re-designed. According to the owner the rental inquiries via the website have been received mostly from domestic tourists. In addition to domestic visitors, inquiries have come from Russia, Germany and Great Britain. Currently, however, there is no valid data of the past visitors of the cottage or the website.

2.1. Hillankukka.com

The cottage currently has a website under domain hillankukka.com. The website is offered in Finnish and English (Hillankukka 2017). According to the owner, WordPress was chosen as the platform to control the content due to its flexibility and simplicity to use. The photos on the website have been taken by the owner of the cottage and are currently in the process of being changed. The current layout has recently been created by the administrator that is one of the owner's family members. In the previous version of the site that was created by the first external administrator the site consisted of subpages, but now the frontpage is built to contain the information.

The frontpage summarizes all the content of the site. As can be seen on the blueprint of the frontpage in figure 2, the first page is built of blocks of information. The site is interactive. As the titles on the navigation panel are clicked it will direct the user to the correct section on the front page to make it easy for the user to locate the information they are looking for.

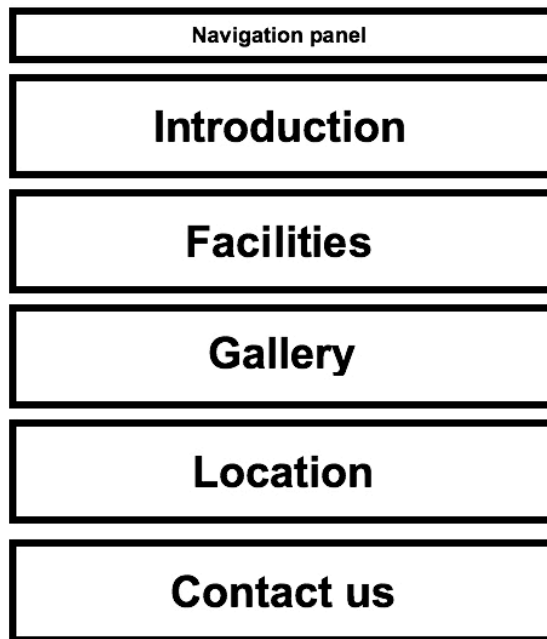


Figure 2. Blueprint of the frontpage of Hillankukka (Hillankukka 2018)

The figure 3 below aims to explain the structure of the website in a visual format. The English version of the site is located as a subpage under the Finnish main page. Only the activities around the area have been saved as its own subpage since it is very informative and includes external links. On the front page alone, there is also a description of the equipment, photo gallery, location and a contact form. The English version of the site is

built by making it another subpage that has its own subpage for activities. Otherwise the English and Finnish versions of the site are identical to each other.

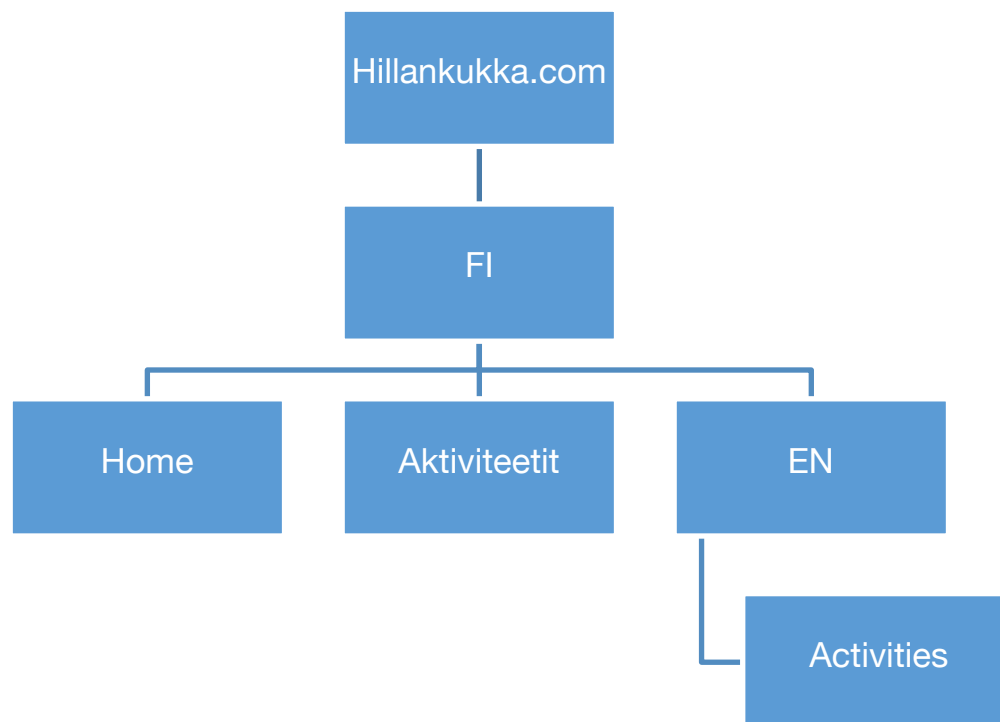


Figure 3. Site map of hillankukka.com (Hillankukka 2017)

2.2. Ylläs

In the statistics for tourism in Ylläs for year 2016 January until August, the Chinese travelers stayed in the accommodation units of Ylläs for 140 nights out of the overall 202 401 nights. Most of the stays were by domestic tourists with 130 686 nights compared to the international tourists with 71 715 nights. The number of tourists has been increasing in Ylläs. Especially the number of international tourists is increasing while the domestic tourism decreases slowly. Between the years 2015 and 2016 the amount of stays increased overall by 8.2 %. The domestic tourism decreased by 3.2 % while the number of international tourists increased by 37.4 %. The number of Chinese tourists in Ylläs has been increasing steadily from the year 2013. In 2013 the Chinese stayed in Ylläs for 35 nights and then almost doubled the overnight stays in 2014 to 69 nights. (Lappi 2017.)

In all of Lapland the overall overnight stays in 2016 from January until August were 1 753 868 nights of which international tourists created 734 837 nights. The Chinese tourists exceeded the number of Japanese tourists by 336 nights by staying in Lapland for 25 102

nights in 2016. The number of Chinese tourists has been increasing in all of Lapland since in 2013 the amount of overnight stays was 15 581 nights. (Lappi 2017.) By looking at these statistics, it could be concluded that there is potential for more. As the number of Chinese tourists in Lapland, more specifically in Ylläs, continues to increase it would be important for the businesses in Ylläs to develop their services further for the Chinese tourists.

For the customers from Beijing and Shanghai to get to Ylläs they can take a direct flight with Finnair to Helsinki-Vantaa airport. From Beijing to Helsinki, it takes about eight (8) hours and from Shanghai to Helsinki about nine (9) hours (Finnair 2016b; Finnair 2016c). Since the flights are relatively long, the travelers might want to stay in Helsinki overnight before continuing to Lapland and Ylläs. The closest airport is in Kittilä, about 50 kilometers away from the cottage which would make about an hour's drive to Hillankukka. There are 1.5 hours' flights from Helsinki-Vantaa airport to Kittilä by Finnair (Finnair 2016a). Another way to get to Ylläs would be to take the night-train to Kolari and then a bus to Ylläs (VR 2016). For the buses there are several options and a bus service called Skibussi comes as close as 400 metres away from Hillankukka (Hillankukka 2016; Ylläs 2016a). The options to get to Hillankukka are various and for a tourist they might appear hard to navigate through. For the Chinese website it might be worth a while to explain these alternatives for the visitors or at the very least provide the links for the customers to find out more.

Ylläs region is known for the ski resorts that surround the Yllästunturi fell. The region has only 850 permanent residents and it mostly lives off tourism (Ylläs 2016a). The activities are many despite the season. During the winter the ski resorts are open and there are several lit skitracks. The closest track to Hillankukka is only 400 metres away (Hillankukka 2016). Other Winter activities include snowmobile driving and there are several companies that rent out the snowmobiles. Some companies offer husky or reindeer sledge rides. During the Summer season some of the activities include berry picking, hunting and fishing, paddling and cycling. (Ylläs 2016b.) Most of the activities are outdoors but there are also shopping opportunities and the ski resorts often have events open for the public for a small fee. The Ylläs fell is only less than 5 kilometres away from Hillankukka and the nearest shop is 2,5 kilometres away and since the local bus goes from the end of the road it is easy to access these areas too (Hillankukka 2016). The region is also known for its scenic views and the amazing nature and the national park Pallas-Yllästunturi is one of the best for hiking. Therefore, Ylläs and Hillankukka would be a destination for someone who is interested in outdoor, even extreme activities and the surrounding nature.

3. Web design and development

This chapter will be focusing on the theories and practices of building a functional business-to-customer website for a small business. The process of website designing will be analysed from the point of view of the company but emphasizing a good customer experience. The trends of website designing will be introduced, discussed and analyzed for the use of website building for a small accommodation business unit. Search engine optimization will also be applied and discussed in brief. This is necessary to understand what needs to be done in order to establish a website.

Web design includes the front-end activities that affect the visitors' experience, such as the graphics, layout and the text content. Web development includes the back-end activities that are the aspects the visitors do not see. These include the codes and technologies that make it possible for the front-end to function. (Willard 2011, 2-3.) To manage the website and to control the web design, a content management system (CMS) is needed. The purpose of a CMS is to help the administrator by making it easy to edit the contents of the site. WordPress, that used to be a blogging platform, is currently one of the leading open-source platforms in addition to Joomla!. (Kraynak & Bluttman 2011, 155.)

A search engine is a software that collects and stores data and information from websites such as key words and phrases and then analyses this data trying to understand the contents of the website (Ledford 2008, 5). Google defines search engine optimization, also known by its abbreviation SEO, best as "putting your site's best foot forward when it comes to visibility in search engines, but your ultimate consumers are your users, not search engines" (Google 2010, 2). Basically, this means that as you are creating a website, although important and necessary, instead of focusing solely on the technical aspects of website creation, the creator should design the website according to the needs of the users they want to attract.

According to Net Market Share (2016) (appendix 2) Google is globally the most used search engine with 66.41 % of all users in 2015 compared to the second most used search engine Baidu that conducted 12.33 % of the searches. Baidu is the widely used search engine by the Chinese internet users and therefore to reach the Chinese audience it is important to optimize the website for Baidu to rank high in the organic results, the natural results that are not paid advertising, of the search engine.

3.1. Planning a site

Before creating content, the website should be planned thoroughly. According to Willard (2011, 18) the planning of a website consists of:

- **Description and objectives:** what will it do?
- **The hosting environment:** where is it located?
- **Content, components and functionalities:** how will it work?
- **Target audience:** who will be its visitors?
- **Timeline:** when should it be live?

To create a website, it is necessary to understand how it functions and the different, required components. The main components of a website are a web server, domain name and web pages. A web server is a computer that is connected to Internet and it stores the contents of the website. When a user searches on a web browser for a specific domain name, that is the unique address of the website, the web server returns the request and shows the web pages. (Mitchell 2007, 5-6.)

According to Mitchell (2007,4) there are three different categories for websites based on their objectives:

- Family/Personal website aims to connect family and friends.
- Online storefront website aims to sell products and services.
- Content publishing website aims to publish own content to a world-wide audience.

By understanding the purpose of the website, it is easier to start building it. To create a website, it needs a web server where the files will be saved. It is called a web host provider. They provide the space to save the content required for web pages to be publicly available. The requirements for the space depend on the type of the content the site will have and how heavy the files are (Mitchell 2007, 28-29). It is easy to find hosts online as there are many different companies offering space. However, there are a few important factors to consider when choosing the host. One of the most important is to ensure compatibility between the host and the CMS. Also, different hosts offer different features. It is important not to accept any advertisements on the site by the host. Therefore, it is better to use a well-known, widely used host like Media Temple, Rackspace, Go Daddy and Dreamhost. A smaller, unknown host might be more unreliable with little if any support. (Potts 2007, 18.)

A domain name is a unique identifier for a website that is followed by an extension such as .com, .net or .org. Domain names can be bought for a specified time online from a domain name registrar that shows the availability of the wanted domain name. (Mitchell 2007, 7-8; 32.) When choosing a domain name, it is important to consider it from the customer's point of view. It should be guessable and memorable and somehow connected to the company. Another way to choose a good domain name would be to utilize search engine optimization (SEO) and choose a domain that works as a search engine tag making it easy for the users to search and discover the website. (Willard 2011, 21.) The domain name will have to be configured to lead the user to the correct website, which means connecting the domain to the host. Usually the hosting company will aid with the configuration but there will be a 24-72-hour delay in registration and configuration of the domain. (Mitchell 2007, 35.) Taking also the delay into consideration, it is even more important to plan the domain and the whole website well before starting the process of setting it live.

It is important to understand the demographics of the visitors. In addition to that, when considering the target audience, the website developer should also take into account the technical aspects such as the target platforms, browsers and screen resolutions on which the users view the website. There are different websites that have created online demographics and conducted market research that provide the data online to assist the process of web designing such as <http://gvu.gatech.edu/index.php?q=research/spotlight>. (Willard 2011, 22-23.)

As the process of planning and starting the process of website creation takes so much time it is necessary to understand the time restrictions. Although getting a host is fast, the configuration of the domain could take up to 72 hours and market research takes a while too. Therefore, the planning phase appears to be a vital part of website creation and plenty of time should be spent on it.

3.2. Content management systems

Content management system (CMS) is a critical part of building a website. There are several different free CMSs available online, but one could also be custom designed and programmed to meet the specific needs of the website (Kraynak & Bluttman 2011, 155). There are many factors the administrator of the site should consider when choosing the right CMS. Some of these factors are the interactivity of the website and the purpose: will the content be solely managed by the administrator or will the visitors be able to share their input, and should it be informative and display content or allow also visitors to discuss (Kraynak & Bluttman 2011, 159).

As there are many CMS available online it is useful to compare some of the most known. The choice of CMS depends on the type of the site. As can be seen in table 1, WordPress supports both blogs and full websites and since it is well established, many hosts support the use of it which could make it an easy choice. However, if the site has several administrators, Joomla! has the feature to control user permissions. Pligg is directed for building a communal site and encourages interactivity between the administrator(s) and the visitors whereas Drupal in general is flexible and allows customization. (Kraynak & Bluttman 2011, 159-160.)

Table 1. Comparison of different content management systems (Kraynak & Bluttman 2011, 159-160)

Content management system	Features
WordPress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Posts are entries. - Can host subpages in addition to blogging - Visitor comments can be controlled. - Hosts often aid with configuration.
Joomla!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The built-in user groups allow to control the rights of different users. - Allows polls and surveys
Drupal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threaded comment model - Flexible user interface - Stores history of changes
Pligg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social networking-based - Very interactive and allows users to contribute

Based on this, for a small business a well-established, well-supported platform would be the most relevant. WordPress with good technical support and add-on applications would be the go-to when choosing a CMS for the first time. Since it can host subpages, it is ideal for building a homepage for a company.

3.3. Structure and layout

The web layout should be created in a way that meets the needs of the visitor but also helps the administrator to fulfill their goals (Willard 2011, 50). The structure of the website should be built around the content as the content affects the layout too. Wireframing is a process where the website's structure is defined without the content (Kraynak & Bluttman 2011, 4). Wireframes are a blueprint of the website and they track the visitors' navigation through the website. It is important to plan the placement of the content and the navigation from the visitors' point of view, because often if the visitor finds it hard to locate the information they need, they will leave the site (Willard 2011, 4-5)

One way to define information architecture is to say it is structuring all the components of the website in a way that supports the usability and findability of information (Morville & Rosenfeld 2006, 4). Information architecture is needed when planning the structure and the way the information is presented on the website. When planning the structure of the website, the exclusivity and inclusivity should be considered: will the same data appear in more than one category. People think differently and with ambiguous information they might be searching for it under different categories. When planning the structure and the different categories of the website it is necessary to find a balance between breadth and depth. Breadth means the number of options at each level, for example the options in the navigation panel and depth would mean the subpages under them. Too many options could overwhelm the user and make them leave the site. Also, if the website structure is too deep and the user must click more than two or three levels, the site risks losing the user. For new websites it is better to use 2-3 levels, so it will be easier to add levels later, should the site grow. (Morville & Rosenfeld 2006, 70-73.)

It is important to make sure the visitor finds what they are looking for on the website. According to Brannan (2010, 45), every page should answer the questions "who", "what" "where" and "when". This also improves the reliability of the website. Every website page should have a header and a footer. Header is the section that will identify the page and stays a constant in all the sites as well as the footer. Footer usually contains information like terms of use, copyright or contact information and it should follow the user through the site. (Brannan 2010, 46-48.) Usually there might also be a link to the site map. The site map collects the structure of the website to one place. If the website is large and contains a lot of information, Brannan (2010, 51) suggests using an alphabetized site index to help the user to navigate the information more easily.

3.4. Design

It is important to have a good structure on the website but also, how it is presented using different colours, font and multimedia. To start, the web designer should decide on the main colours of the site. The colours should be consistent and focus on 4-5 main colours to make the website appealing and usable. Computers use RGB (red, green and blue) where there are 256 values for each 3 colours and when mixed, there are over 16 million shades. (Brannan 2010, 90-91.) To help decide on the colours, there are free tools like Adobe Color CC (color.adobe.com) that shows which colors complement each other although this can also be done by testing too. When planning the main colours of the website, it is necessary to understand the target group and the visitors of the website since different cultures have different connotations on colours.

Once the main colours are decided upon, it is important to then understand how to combine the colours. If the website contains mostly text, the background and the text should be well-contrasted to make it easy for the user to read it. Black text on a white background is very common as it is easy to read. Also, when the designer wants to use colours on the website, it is often the dark and light shades of the one colour. However, for readability, it is better to use dark text on light background. In some cases, like menu panels, it might be acceptable to use light text on a dark background but then it is important to use a bold and clear font to make it stand out and to create a contrast. The RGB colour wheel is also useful for testing the background colours. In addition to general readability, it is crucial to take people with special needs into account. Colour blind people could be viewing the site and that is why it is better not to combine two of red, green, brown, grey or purple together. (Laing & Lewis 2010, 82-84.) All the colours might not appear the same on each device. When choosing the colours it might be necessary to test them on different devices to see how they look.

Font is the way all the text contents appear on the website. It is a combination of pitch, size and typeface (Brannan 2010, 113). The website browsers use the fonts that are stored in the computer. Therefore, even the text might appear differently on different devices. If the font used on the website is not available on user's device, it will be replaced by the default font which would make the website appear different. Brannan (2010, 116) suggests to also not specify the font size but allow it to use relative size that is defined in the form of a percentage. When users who like to read a bigger font, adjust the default font settings of their browser, the size of the font on the website changes in relation to their preferences. He also suggests using appropriate spacing from 1,5 to 2 to make the text on the site more readable. Culture affects the way we read text. In the western world the text is read from left to right but in some eastern cultures they read right to left. This

will affect also the positioning of the text. If the text is placed wrongly, the users will struggle finding the beginning of the line and it will tire them more easily. When a site is justified, the left and right margins are straight aligned. For the western world, the text should be left justified. Links are useful to support the text and to provide the user with additional information. Usually links are underlined and differentiated from the rest of the text this way. In addition, it is better to use links like footnotes and add them at the end of the site rather than using them within the main text body as this will distract the website user from the actual content. That is why to emphasize other text, it is better to use effects like bolding or enlarging the word. Same applies to capitalizing to emphasize. Capitalizing in excess reduces the legibility of the website and that is why it should be avoided. (Brannan 2010, 118-125.)

To appear professional, the website should not be using clipart or animated GIFs. Cliparts are small, cartoon-like images that are available for example on Microsoft Word. Brannan (2010, 135) suggests using icons instead. There are free icons available online and it is better to use icons of the same collection throughout the site to keep the consistent look. Photos should also be formatted before putting them online. The user could have a slow internet connection and so downloading a website that stores heavy, high-quality photos would take them a long time and they could give up in the process of waiting. A large file can be reduced in by changing the dimensions and the size of the image. Dimension refers to the length and width of the image and size to the file size and the memory that it uses on the disk. It is also not just the technical aspects of the image but also the designer should consider whether the use of photos is relevant to the content of the site. The photos should relate to the content and add to it and it is important to also ensure they do not create any false impressions of the contents. (Brannan 2010, 141.)

Without images the website would be less entertaining and informative. When choosing images, it is also important to understand the copyright laws when using free photos. Often free will mean it is free to use the photo for personal uses but not for business or public use. Hot-linking is when the site's HTML refers to an image or another source that is hosted externally: i.e. a photo that is located on another website. This should be avoided as then the cost of the usage goes to the original host and could be considered stealing. Instead, there are photos that use Creative Commons license. Creative Commons basically offers a standardized system of different level of sharing of copyrights. The different licenses are explained in table 2 that introduces the 4 different licenses a photo could have. (Brannan 2010, 131-133.)

Table 2. The Creative Commons licenses (Brannan 2010, 133)

Scheme	Explanation
Attribution	The work can be used and derived for works but the original creator must be credited.
Noncommercial	The work can only be used noncommercially (personal use).
No Derivative Works	The original work can be used as it is, but it cannot be altered.
Share Alike	The derivative work must be under the same license as the original.

When choosing other multimedia for the site, it is also about the relevancy. The multimedia could make the website heavier to download and could be harmful or it could enhance the user experience. It is about the type of the site that determines whether multimedia content should be used. Brannan (2010, 149) suggest background music should be avoided as the user might not share the music taste of the designer and when it is automated the user does not have the control over it. Video and music can both be embedded on the website, but a better way would be to link the material. This way the user's browser will select the plug-in or application to be used and this will ensure the functionality of it. Also, hosting videos and other heavy content on your website, could be very expensive. When using videos, it is important to choose a file format that is supported by the user's browser because otherwise the content might appear broken. This would be another reason to use an external service like YouTube. (Brannan 2010, 151; 157.)

3.5. Site contents and SEO

The contents of the site are all the information there is. The content should provide answers to the questions the users have and therefore it is important to focus on how the information is presented. The information should be presented in a clear manner. The website of a business should state the business name, business description, contact information and hours of operation. (Langer 2000, 73-75.) The content should be kept current and accurate. The frequency at which the website should be updated depends on the type

of the website it is. More time sensitive businesses must update their content more frequently. To have up-to-date information on the website also creates credibility in the eyes of the visitors. (Langer 2000, 82.)

The psychologists have discovered a people learn best in small units (Brannan 2010, 61). Therefore, the information should be cut into small pieces and organized based on the similarity of the information to make it easy for the users to read it. Brannan (2010, 62-62) suggests using the inverted pyramid structure that is used by the journalists. The first sentences on the website are most vital and should answer the questions who, what, when, where, why and how. After that the text can offer more background story but the answers to the questions should be provided in 50 words or less to engage the user to read more. However, not all the users will read the 50 words even. That is why it is also important to format informative and engaging headings. This will help the user that is just skimming through the site to find the information they need. (Brannan 2010, 62-64.)

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) affects the content of the website too. The search engines like Google look through the words of the website to classify and rank it. To rank higher in Google results Moore (2013, 140-141) suggests having a brief description of the site, have a strong heading on the page, repeat keywords in the middle and at the end of the page if possible and have a caption for each image as Google cannot read the text in the photos. According to Moore (2013, 142) the position of the website in the non-paid, organic search results of a search engine are determined by a set of factors like:

1. The frequency of updates
2. The wording of the website
3. The amount of traffic the website attracts
4. The relevancy of the content
5. Title, description, keywords and labels on images
6. The amount of references on other sites. (Moore 2013, 142.)

In author's opinion, it might be useful to have someone to proof-read the text before publishing it as placing keywords within the text could be difficult without sounding unnatural.

4. Website design for a Chinese audience

As was established on chapter 4, the website design is also affected by the culture. Different colours symbolize different things and the language affects the way the website is laid out. This chapter aims to explain how the website should look like when targeting the Chinese users.

According to Schäferhoff (2014) Chinese is the most spoken language online and there are over 600 million Chinese customers on the internet. Therefore, it is important to have a website optimized for Chinese users. In an article by Tomas Laurinavicius (2015) on Forbes, the trends of web design in 2016 are moving towards a more interactive and visually rich style. This means there will be more videos, animations and colors used. However, more content means also slower loading speed. When making a website, the speed of the website is an important factor to take into consideration as it crucially affects the customer experience. In China, Sohu.com and Sina.com are very popular despite of being visually very simple with the focus on creating text content (Ning 28 April 2014). In 2016 China's Internet speed was listed 91st on the broadband speed out of world's over 200 countries (Wong 2016). This means that in China the internet speed overall tends to be relatively slow so having the emphasis on texts and links is what makes a functional website for them in comparison to the heavier western websites that often take more time to load. The slowness in loading speed is mainly caused by the blocks set by Chinese government. Some material could be censored, and mostly non-Chinese websites and materials face this problem. (Zhou 2016.) In chapter 3, it was learnt that the Chinese like to buy on mobile devices. In website design this should be considered, and mobile optimization should be one of the priorities. This also goes hand-in-hand with the relatively slow internet connection when designing the website, so the loading time and mobile-friendliness should be tested before the launch.

In StatCounter's graph as seen in the appendix 1 showing the Chinese users' browser preferences between June 2010 and June 2016, Google Chrome has experienced rapid growth in the recent years. It is necessary to make sure the website supports Google Chrome. As the online content is highly controlled in China, additionally it is important to use effective search engine optimization (SEO) to rank high in Chinese search engines such as Baidu.

The colours create the atmosphere of the website. As the colours tend to symbolize and have different connotation across cultures, when creating the website, you need to understand the target group and their culture. The table 3 has some of the main colours and their meanings in Chinese culture listed. The table was created based on the content on coloria.net to present the found data in a clear format. As can be seen, colours like black, blue, green, grey and white to an extent should be avoided whereas purple, red, yellow and orange should be favored.

Table 3 Colours in Chinese culture (Coloria 2013)

Colour	Meaning
Black	sadness, cruelty, suffer, sin, guilt
Red	wealth, happiness, power
Purple	heaven, loyalty, coolness
Blue	immortality, colour for little girls. Also connected to grief and death. Light blue: sky Dark blue: night and protective colour
Green	unfaithfulness
Yellow	wealth, wisdom, power, patience, stamina
Orange	luck and love
Grey	cheapness of the product
White	moderation, honesty, life, also a colour of grief

To summarize the meaning of these trends, for a small accommodation business, the functionality should be the priority. The website should preferably be fast to load, and the information should be easily available. The text on the website is important but it should be easy to browse through to make sure the potential customers find what they need. Although blue and white are usually connected to Finland, in the context of website design for Chinese, those colours should be avoided and instead the focus should be on red, yellow and orange. As the website will focus on the Chinese customers, more specifically

customers from Beijing and Shanghai, the website must be available in China and the content be created so that it meets the Chinese prerequisites.

4.1. Chinese online buying behavior

As said in chapter 2, the Chinese are an important target group for Hillankukka. Therefore, it is important to understand how the Chinese make the purchase decision and how they behave online. Chapter 3 aims to explain some of the factors of Chinese buying behavior. When considering selling or advertising something online for a Chinese target audience, it is necessary to understand who you are targeting and the demography of the people who are shopping online.

China is a large country with a diverse population. There are 656 cities, 48 000 dialects and 80 spoken languages within the country (Visit Finland 2018). According to a study conducted by ORC international for Visit Finland in 2017, 74 % of travelers book their accommodation online and over 60 % book through mobile. In China the customers book their travels on mobile more than any other country. (Visit Finland 2017, 10; 18.) Currently the growth is seen in independent adventure travelers which for a country like Finland with four seasons and a lot of possibilities for outdoor activities is a great opportunity and a selling point regarding the Chinese outbound tourism. Usually the under 45 years old Chinese travelers will research and make their buying decision online whereas over 45 years old Chinese travelers rely on more traditional platforms like guide books. They spend 11 days researching and planning their trip in advance. For information they use online accommodation sites. That is why it is important to advertise on mobile-friendly platforms to gain their awareness and interest. (Visit Finland 2017, 146-147.)

Chinese like to read reviews and another important source of information is friends and family. That is why often also the websites tend to have social media features and encourage the users to share their experiences. The Chinese travelers like to share their experience from the pre-trip to post-trip on social media. Everything they experience will be shared with friends and family. When the Chinese traveler describes their trip in Lapland of Finland they tell about snow, clean nature, fresh air, polar lights and Santa Claus. (Visit Finland 2017, 16-17.) As these are some of the most popular themes among Chinese, the website aiming to promote a Finnish travel product should focus on building around them.

A study conducted by Visit Finland in 2015 showed that in the top 100 most popular websites in China, there are only five (5) foreign websites that are Amazon, Google, Bing, Microsoft and Wikipedia. All of them have been blocked completely or partially during the

past by the Chinese government. The most popular website in China is their search engine www.baidu.com. (Visit Finland 2015c, 3.) This also shows that the Chinese like to do research so doing search engine optimization (SEO) should be a priority for a company trying to enter the Chinese market. Chinese tend to favor the Chinese websites which is another reason to have a website translated or have at least some information in their own language available. Generally, Finland as a destination is mostly sold by Chinese companies and therefore it is important to focus on SEO and make sure to be otherwise present on Chinese websites. (Visit Finland 2015c, 17.)

4.2. SEO for Baidu

Baidu is currently the most popular search engine on mobile with 80 % of the share of all searches (Visit Finland 2015c, 4). To do effective SEO, it is necessary to get to know the platform. The search engine uses much more sponsored links than the western Google and they have not been distinguished from the organic search results as clearly. The search engines in China also have a sign that shows the website is verified. They emphasize visual look in the results and there are often up to five (5) photos visible by the search results. In the study conducted by Visit Finland in 2015, they found out with the search word "holiday in Finland" (芬兰旅游) out of 14 photos, half were of snow and Santa Claus and the other half of sights and different cities like Helsinki, Rovaniemi and Tampere. (Visit Finland 2015c, 6; 8.)

As SEO is a crucial part of web designing, there are several guides available to serve the purpose of helping new website creators make a more attractive, easily accessible website. According to Baidu Guide (2016) the domain of the website is important. They advise to use a domain that is short, easy, and trustworthy and supports the brand. Also, the suffix should be one that is widely used, for example, .cn, .com or .net as this also creates a sense of safety and security. For Chinese websites, it is advised to use PinYin domain names as this makes searching for the website through search engines easier to find. (Baidu 2016.)

Baidu has an analysing service called Baidu Spider. It is an analysing program that goes through websites' contents and sends the findings to Baidu Index. The findings affect the website's position in the Baidu's natural search results; whether the website is shown on the front page or later. (Baidu 2016.) As an analysing program Baidu Spider is not as effective as for example Google's counterparts, therefore for a website targeting Chinese, it is important to optimize for Baidu (Qian 22.10.2014). Ranking on a search engine is affected by the positioning of the words. The location of the key words, the frequency in

which the key word appears on the website, the amount and type of links that are on the website and the other websites that link to your website and the amount of times users have clicked-through your website are all some of the elements that affect the ranking (Ledford 2008, 10). The ranking is important since it directly affects the visibility of the website and indirectly the number of visitors on the page. The website should be present on the first three pages of results since users very rarely search beyond them (Ledford 2008, 18). As the analysing program Baidu Spider is not able to analyse the content or text in photos, it emphasizes the meaning of quality text content to rank higher up in the search results (BaiduGuide 2016).

In Chinese language there are simplified and traditional characters that differ from each other by the complexity and the number of strokes. In Beijing and Shanghai, as in all of mainland China, they use simplified characters and therefore the website should be written in simplified characters to make it easier for the target group to find it on Baidu. (Shigong 2009; Qian 22.10.2014.) Key words should be optimized for the Chinese language and for this it is better to have a native speaker translate them since Baidu can analyse and recognize the misspellings and words of English origin which would make the website rank lower in Baidu's search results (Qian 22.10.2014).

In addition to the key words, language and the content of the website it is necessary to consider hosting a website in China as Baidu tends to rank these websites higher (Qian 22.10.2014). To host a website on a Chinese server, the business owner needs to obtain an internet content provider (ICP) from the Chinese government. The ICP does not affect the visibility of the website in China in general but it is required by the Chinese law to obtain this to host a website in China (Schaefer 3.2.2015). To obtain an ICP, the applier should reside in China since it requires an enormous amount of paper work although it is not restricted for a foreigner residing outside of China to apply for one (Shaefer 3.2.2015). Another option to make the website more widely available for a Chinese mainland audience is to host on servers in Hong Kong or Singapore which in general is an easier process (Qian 22.10.2014).

For a small business an effective SEO plan is important. Hosting a website in China could prove to be a much too complicated process for a small or medium sized business as it would also require residence in China and therefore hosting a website in Hong Kong or Singapore would be much better options if the business is serious about competing in the Chinese market (Schaefer 3.2.2015). Outside of the ICP and host servers, the SEO plan for Baidu is possible for a business to conduct as the key lies in the key words. However, when targeting a Chinese audience with such a complex language, the website designer

might need to hire a professional to translate the text to serve the purpose. For a small business to get visibility on a search engine, the designer should focus on building a set of keywords that people search for the most as well as consider the way the website is laid out: in which order the information is presented and the use of photos. (BaiduGuide 2016.)

5. Process description

In this chapter, the whole process of establishing a website for Hillankukka rental cottage in Chinese is discussed. The product is a Chinese website that provides the necessary information of the cottage and the booking in a format targeted to customers in Beijing and Shanghai. Since the website is owned by an independent operator, it has been created in a close cooperation according to their needs and wants.

Based on the research conducted in chapters 3 and 4, the author created a plan for the establishment of the Chinese website. As the basis, as introduced in chapter 3.1, Willard's (2011, 18) list for creating a website will be used. For SEO planning, as introduced in chapter 3.5., Moore's (2013, 142) list of factors affecting search engine placement will be applied when planning the content.

5.1. Creation of the website

After figuring out the purpose of the website, one of the first steps according to Willard (2011, 18) to starting a website are choosing the host, domain name and the CMS. Currently the hillankukka.com website is hosted by Nebula that is a Finnish ICT company that provides hosting, email and other online services. It offers 25GB of space and an email address as well as customer service. The recommendation for a monthly data transfer is 200 GB per a month that should be enough for a small independent company. (Nebula 2017.) The current CMS is Wordpress that was chosen by the owner for its simplicity and ease of use. Because the aim is to create a Chinese website that considers the needs of the owner and is simple to administrate, it was decided together with the owner that to avoid additional costs and to keep everything centralized, instead of creating a separate site hosted on another server, the Chinese website should be created as a subpage on the current website in the same style as the English version. Also, for the Chinese visitors it is not relevant for the final product what platform is used. Therefore, the focus of the project moved more towards the importance of the layout and content.

Second step to creating the website is to design the layout. The layout was edited when the site was last updated to its current form. The previous colours of the site were dark wood, white and black which was thought to be an uninviting from the Chinese perspective and it had been there since the beginning, so the site was starting to look outdated. The author together with the owner and the current administrator, based on the Chinese understanding of the colours, it was decided to use orange, golden yellow and wood-like beige for the website's background and grey and black for the text to make sure it is readable. As in the chapter 4.1. was introduced, the Chinese appreciate the clean nature (Visit

Finland 2017, 16-17). Therefore, the website should also highlight the Lappish nature. It was thought the colours would also connect well with the surrounding nature around the cottage and so all the photos used to design the background of the website are somehow connected to nature. A new animated top banner was added that shows the nature in Ylläs area. The earlier website was not very mobile friendly. As the layout was changed, the font size was changed to relative sizes, so the text will change relative to the user's screen resolution.

Creating the content appeared to be the most challenging part. Chinese language is very different to western languages. At first, the author attempted to write the text on their own as they thought it would be relatively simple text. After more research was done, the author decided to ask some Chinese acquaintances to translate parts of text written by the author from English to simplified mandarin Chinese to ensure it is fluent and to support SEO. As the target group is Chinese mainland customers aged 25-35 who are travelling in either a small group of friends or with their families and since there has been growth in adventure travelling, it was decided the text on the website should put emphasis on the possibilities for groups and the Lappish nature as well as the experiences the Lappish nature can provide. In the text on the website, the Northern lights and the outdoor activities are repeatedly mentioned. Although the Chinese also enjoy shopping, it was decided to focus on the outdoor activities as they are the most evident around the Äkäslompolo area. This was thought to support the SEO too, as the target group is expected to be interested in the outdoor activities and the nature around the area.

The owner of the cottage had ordered new photos recently to be taken for the cottage's Booking.com page. These same photos were used on the Chinese page too as they portray the nature in the surroundings of the cottage well in addition to showing the facilities as the author thought they would support the text. Because the owner of the cottage is the one answering the rental inquiries, some thought had to be put into the inquiries. There is a contact form on the site that was added to make it easier for the potential customers to contact the owner. Since the owner does not speak Chinese and currently it is not known how many Chinese inquiries might arrive, it was decided to encourage the visitors of the Chinese page to contact the owner in English. Also, it was suggested by the author to the owner, should the amount of inquiries and visits to the Chinese page increase, to outsource the Chinese inquiries.

Lastly Willard says the final step to the website is deciding on the timeline; when should the site be live (2011, 18). The active part of planning of the website and its contents and creating its contents took around five (5) months. Since winter has been a very important

season for Hillankukka in general according to the owner, it was thought the Chinese page should be live by the first week of June 2018 so the Chinese who like to plan their trips ahead of time would have time to do so.

5.2. Final product

The final product is a website targeting the Chinese tourists coming to Ylläs in the Lapland of Finland. Below a demo of the Chinese website can be seen. The flags for the different language options were added to make it easier to choose between the language versions. Everything is on the same page so it is easier to access all the information at one page load. Some parts of the website are in English because it is expected for the Chinese to preferably contact the owner in English, thus they are expected to understand English to an extent. Currently it takes two (2) page loads to access the Chinese site as www.hillankukka.com leads to the Finnish site and from the upper right corner the Chinese www.hillankukka.com/ch can be accessed as can be seen in figure 4. In figure 4, also a still of the animation can be seen. The reason to have the animation is to showcase the nature and improve the user experience. The target group is expected to be interested in the nature of Ylläs and the activities it offers and therefore this visual was chosen to be used on the site.

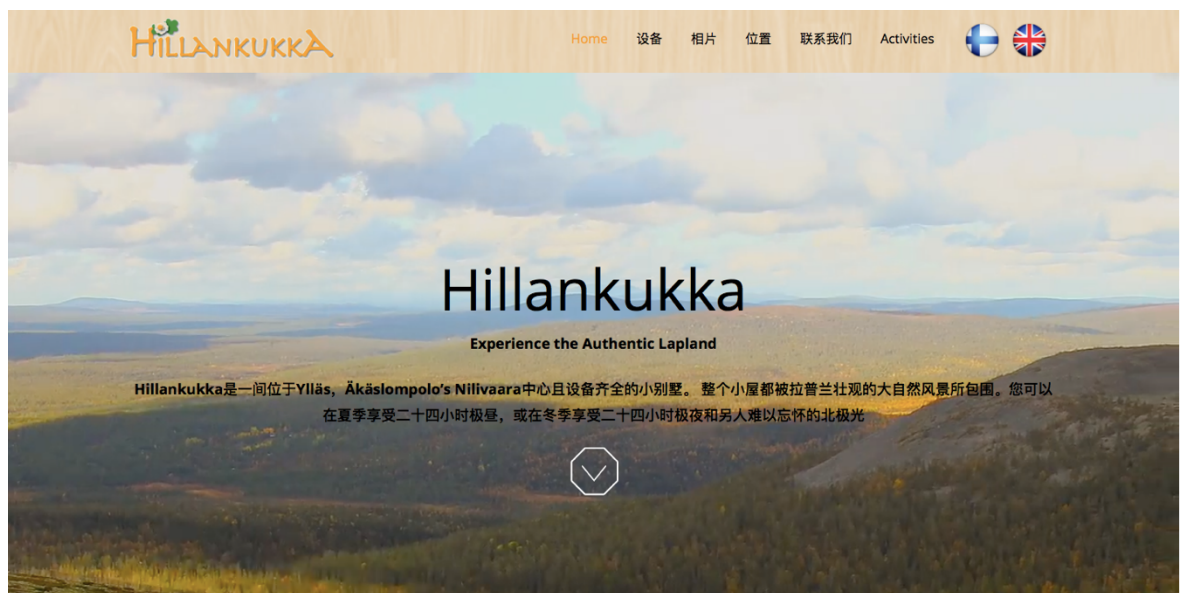


Figure 4. The top of the Hillankukka page (Hillankukka 2018).

In figure 5, the box below the introduction/animation is shown. In this box, the amenities and facilities are introduced. The icons were added to highlight the special amenities that potentially could distinguish this unit from the others around it, and to make the website more visually appealing. Although the search engines cannot read the visuals, they were thought to make the user's visit to the site more pleasant. The text is spaced widely to

make sure the text is easy to read, and the visitor finds the information they were looking for.



Figure 5. The general information and facilities section (Hillankukka 2018)

The photo section is shown in figure 6. To make the downloading time faster, only the thumbnail photos of the high-resolution photos are shown. By clicking them, the user can enlarge and look at them closer if they so wish to. The thumbnails are currently the size of 170 pixels x 170 pixels which is relatively large, to allow the visitor to still get an idea of the facilities at a glance. The cottage is made of deadwood, so the author thought the background for the photo section should show a wood print to emphasize the warmth of the photos.



Figure 6. The photo section (Hillankukka 2018)

As previously mentioned, the target group is expected to be interested in outdoor activities. Therefore, in the location section below the photos as shown in figure 7, the distances to the most known ski slopes are mentioned as well as the nearest restaurant and shop. To help the visitor to locate and understand where the cottage is situated, a map of

the location was added next to the text. The photo of the leaves in the background was thought to bring more colour and make the website livelier.

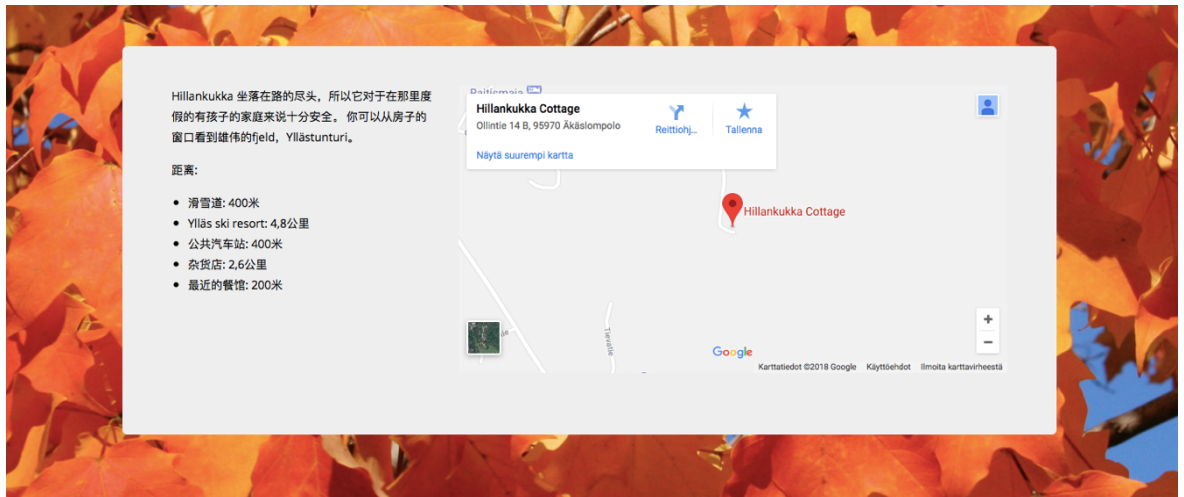


Figure 7. The location section (Hillankukka 2018)

To make contacting the owner for inquiries easier, a contact form was added as shown in figure 8. However, the contact section still contains the direct contact information of the owner as some might prefer to find alternative ways of contacting. Also, it was thought to appear more professional. The contact form is in English, as the person sending the inquiry is expected to be able to communicate in English. This is also mentioned above the contact form. To make the appearance of the website look more coherent, the same wooden background was used for the contact form as for the photos.

Figure 8. The contact form (Hillankukka 2018)

6. Discussion

The aim of this thesis was to create a Chinese website for a rental cottage and to show the basic theory for website creation. The product was to plan and create a simple and well-functioning, customer experience focused website targeted to young adults coming to Lapland of Finland from Chinese mainland cities such as Beijing and Shanghai. The product is meant to make the cottage more appealing to the potential tourist looking for an alternative accommodation.

6.1. Conclusion and suggestions

The final product meets the goals well. The website by structure is logical and simple. The text content is short and simple but yet focuses on providing the visitors to the site all the necessary information a person looking to visit Lapland might be looking for. Especially the layout of the website was a success. The layout is fresh and applies the Chinese understanding of colours yet at the same time it resembles the nature in Ylläs. Visually the site turned out very well and uses different elements without being too complicated. Since the Chinese site requires just two (2) page loads to upload, it is not too heavy to navigate through thus improving the customer experience.

The website is supposed to target Chinese customers living in Beijing and Shanghai. This could be more prominent on the site. The final product is generic by the information it provides and the target group might not be as clear on the website as it could be. To make this more evident, it would require more research on the specifics of the people living in Beijing and Shanghai or more knowledge on how they differ from the other Chinese tourists. The load time is very important. Most of the site loads quickly but currently the animation on the top takes a lot of time and might not be visible to all the visitors to the site. The animation could be improved and instead of using a video file it could be changed to a GIF that would be lighter or even just a photo slideshow.

For the future, if the visits from China to the page become more frequent, it might be worth investing in a domain hosted in China as the Baidu search engine favors these sites over sites hosted abroad. Also, outsourcing the Chinese responses to a Chinese speaking personnel could improve the customer experience and allow targeting a wider audience of Chinese people who do not necessarily speak English.

6.2. Own learning process

The process of planning a website started early already in year 2016 when I talked with the owner of the cottage about the possibilities of improving the website for the thesis. Together we found my topic and realized this would be useful for us both. It was a great advantage to know the commissioner personally as communication was easy and quick. This, however, also had one disadvantage. Since I know the commissioner, I was never working on a specific schedule by him. I could choose my own pace which to an extent constituted in the delay of the creation of the website. What was especially good, was the fact that I was given the freedom to alter the site as I would deem necessary. Especially targeting the Chinese customers who differ so much from the western by the culture, it is good not to be too restricted since there were quite a lot of changes that had to be made in the end. The design and layout of the website went through the biggest alterations.

During the project, there were a lot of challenges that I had to overcome. I had no prior experience of creating a website that would rely so much on building it from a scratch without using too many ready-made solutions. The research at first seemed like one of the biggest challenges as it was hard to find material for someone who is not that experienced in coding and the works of the digital world. As the project continued I was able to find the right path to follow and step by step learnt to understand the terminology and different components and phases of establishing a website. Chinese as a target group was almost completely an unknown topic for me. I had had a few courses of mandarin Chinese before where we also learnt about the culture. For this project I had to consider them more from the point of view of a business owner. I now know more about their buying habits and how their system works.

The biggest challenge in the end seems to have been time. In the beginning I had thought about including social media as part of the project but that was later discarded as there would have been then too much to research. Most of the work was done in 2016 and beginning of 2018. At the time I started the thesis process, I was already applying for another degree which took most of my time. I was also working on the side. During the process, I realized, to write a thesis you need to focus on it completely and manage your time better as it requires most of your attention and it really cannot be done on the side of something else. I think that is the most important thing I have learnt: time management and prioritizing. Once I realized this, it was not that demanding anymore to keep writing the thesis and working on the project.

The commissioner is very satisfied with the result as it was made taking his concerns into account. However, there are some things I would do differently should I be assigned to a

project like this in the future. For the future, it would be necessary to build a good schedule ahead of starting the project and then stick to it. Too much freedom is not efficient or productive and some guidelines are needed. When there is a little pressure, things will get done better and sooner. Also, I easily ended up doing more before looking closer into the topic. I did some research before starting to plan the website in 2016 but finally when I actively continued it in 2018, a lot of research was made alongside developing the site. That is not very optimal as you might then have to alter the things you have created later. Luckily, in this case I did not have to do much of it as the website is relatively simple but in a more demanding project this could have caused some problems.

I think this project all in all has taught me a lot. At the end of the project I understand what is required for a website of a small accommodation business and I understand better how the Internet works. I have become more interested in the topic in general and hope to continue developing the website even further if I get a chance to. I understand the Chinese as a target group and know more about their needs and requirements for their stay in Finland. Most importantly, I have learnt to manage my time and schedule my projects better which I think is the biggest personal development I have had during this project.

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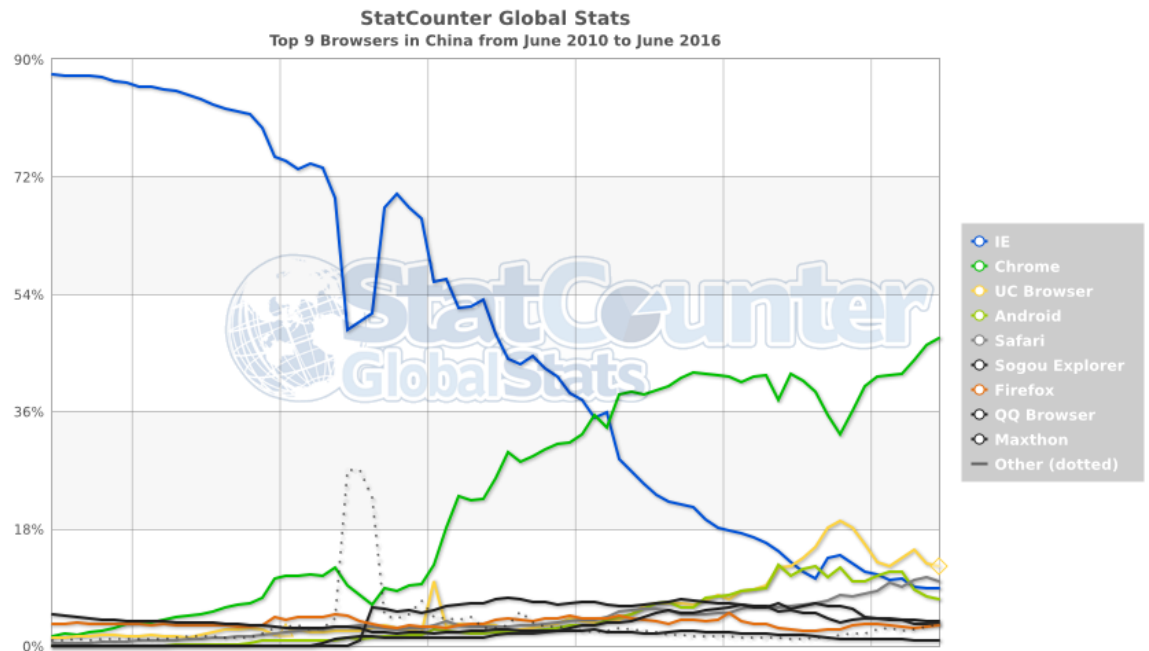
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Appendices

Appendix 1. StatCounter's China's browser use statistics (Statcounter 2016)



Appendix 2. NetMarketShare's piechart of most used search engines Jan-Dec 2015 (NetMarketShare 2016)

